

Claims

[c1] 1.A method comprising:
registering by a plurality of users with an information provider, where personal information regarding the plurality of users is stored by the information provider;
purchasing by an organization from the information provider a desired sub-set of the personal information regarding a sub-plurality of the plurality of users; and,
paying by the information provider to each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users a portion of an amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

[c2] 2.The method of claim 1, wherein registering the plurality of users with the information provider comprises indicating by the plurality of users whether they wish to be personally identifiable to a plurality of organizations including the organization.

[c3] 3.The method of claim 1, wherein registering the plurality of users with the information provider comprises indicating by the plurality of users parts of the personal information that they wish to hide from a plurality of organizations including the organization on an individually identifiable basis, and parts of the personal information that they wish to reveal from the plurality of organizations on the individually identifiable basis.

[c4] 4.The method of claim 1, wherein registering the plurality of users with the information provider comprises indicating by the plurality of users price ranges for which they are willing to divulge parts of the personal information to a plurality of organizations including the organization.

[c5] 5.The method of claim 1, wherein purchasing by the organization from the information provider the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the sub-plurality of the plurality of users comprises purchasing aggregated information not individually identifying any of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users.

[c6] 6.The method of claim 1, wherein purchasing by the organization from the information provider the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the sub-plurality of the plurality of users comprises purchasing information individually identifying each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users.

[c7] 7.The method of claim 1, wherein purchasing by the organization from the information provider the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the sub-plurality of the plurality of users comprises negotiating between the organization and the information provider a price range for the desired sub-set of the personal information acceptable to the organization, the information provider, and the sub-plurality of the plurality of users.

[c8] 8.The method of claim 1, wherein paying by the information provider to each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user comprises paying by the information provider to each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users a non-monetary amount of units corresponding to and representing the portion of the amount collected by information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

[c9] 9.The method of claim 1, wherein paying by the information provider to each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user comprises paying by the information provider to each of the sub-plurality of the plurality of users a monetary amount corresponding to and representing the portion of the amount collected by information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

[c10] 10.The method of claim 1, further comprising utilizing the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the sub-plurality of the plurality of users by the organization.

[c11] 11.A method comprising:

registering by a user with an information provider, where personal information of the user is stored centrally by the information provider;
storing a user identifier at the user;
requesting a desired sub-set of the personal information of the user by an organization to the information provider based on the user identifier as retrieved from the user;
upon verifying by the information provider that the organization is a subscribing organization, providing the organization with the desired sub-set of the personal information by the information provider;
paying by the organization to the information provider for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information; and,
paying by the information provider to the user a portion of an amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

- [c12] 12.The method of claim 11, further comprising, prior to storing the user identifier at the user, sending the user identifier by the information provider to the user.
- [c13] 13.The method of claim 11, further comprising, after storing the user identifier at the user, retrieving by the organization the user identifier.
- [c14] 14.The method of claim 11, further comprising, interacting by the organization with the user based on the desired sub-set of the personal information received by the organization.
- [c15] 15.The method of claim 11, wherein paying by the information provider to the user the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user comprises paying by the information provider to the user one of a monetary and non-monetary amount corresponding to and representing the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

[c16] 16.A method comprising:

registering by a user with an information provider, where personal information of the user is encrypted by the information provider;

storing locally at the user the personal information of the user as encrypted;

subscribing by an organization with the information provider for access to a decryption key for decrypting the personal information of the user;

requesting a desired sub-set of the personal information of the user by the organization to the user;

providing the organization with the desired sub-set of the personal information as encrypted by the user, the organization decrypting the desired sub-set of the personal information;

paying by the organization to the information provider for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information; and,

paying by the information provider to the user a portion of an amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.

[c17] 17.The method of claim 16, wherein subscribing by the organization with the information provider for access to the decryption key comprises the organization receiving from the information provider the decryption key for storage by the organization for subsequent decryption of the personal information of the user.

[c18] 18.The method of claim 16, wherein the organization decrypting the desired sub-set of the personal information comprises the organization passing the desired sub-set of the personal information as encrypted to the information provider for decryption and receiving back from the information provider the desired sub-set of the personal information as decrypted.

[c19] 19.The method of claim 16, further comprising, interacting by the organization with the user based on the desired sub-set of the personal information received by the organization.

[c20] 20.The method of claim 16, wherein paying by the information provider to the user the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the

organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user comprises paying by the information provider to the user one of a monetary and non-monetary amount corresponding to and representing the portion of the amount collected by the information provider from the organization for access to the desired sub-set of the personal information regarding the user.